

Dime by E. R. Frank

The realities of teen prostitution are revealed in this eye-opening, heartbreaking story from the author of *America*, which Booklist called "a piercing, unforgettable novel" and Kirkus Reviews deemed "a work of sublime humanity."

As a teen girl in Newark, New Jersey, lost in the foster care system, Dime just wants someone to care about her, to love her. A family. And that is exactly what she gets—a daddy and two "wifeys." So what if she has to go out and earn some coins to keep her place? It seems a fair enough exchange for love.

Dime never meant to become a prostitute. It happened so gradually, she pretty much didn't realize it was happening until it was too late.

But when a new "wifey" joins the family and Dime finds out that Daddy doesn't love her the way she thought he did, will Dime have the strength to leave? And will Daddy let her?

Genres **Young Adult Fiction Realistic
Fiction Contemporary Abuse Teen Survival**
...more

336 pages, Kindle Edition

First published May 26, 2015

DIME

BY E.R. FRANK • RELEASE DATE: MAY 26, 2015

Dime's desire to save her friend transcends artifice and approaches heroism, making for a tremendously affecting novel.

Frank's first novel since *Wrecked* (2005) is a searing examination of teenage prostitution.

Dime is 14, loves books, and turns tricks. After her foster mother kicked her out, living with Daddy is like something out of a dream. Daddy buys her clothes and sticks up for her against Brandy and L.A., the other girls in the house—and he's so gentle when he takes her virginity. When Daddy needs Dime to make some money, she joins L.A. and Brandy on the track, having sex for coin. The arrival of new girl Lollipop, just 11, makes Dime realize she doesn't love Daddy anymore—and she doesn't want this life. It's only when they realize Lollipop is pregnant that Dime knows what she'll do. If she writes a note that explains everything, people will take care of Lollipop's baby. But what she'll do to protect Lollipop and her baby can only end one way for Dime herself—and it's a sacrifice she's ready to make. The story is related in flashbacks as Dime ponders her note, taking inspiration from *The Book Thief* and imagining writing it in various allegorical voices: Sex, Violence, Money. Since her overall narration is fairly straightforward, the note device often feels self-conscious rather than artful.

Dime's desire to save her friend transcends artifice and approaches heroism, making for a tremendously affecting novel. (*Fiction. 14 & up*)

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Categories:

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL THEMES

Commonsense Media

- Drinking, Drugs & Smoking
a little

Adults drink alcohol. Foster mom drinks to excess when taking care of children. References to prostitutes on "smack" and who "tweak." Teen girl shown on heroin. References to eighth-graders smoking pot and drinking.

Did you know you can flag iffy content? Adjust limits for Drinking, Drugs & Smoking in your kid's entertainment guide.

Get started Close

- Parents Need to Know

Parents need to know that *Dime* is a realistic, eye-opening depiction of teen prostitution and trafficking. This is not a book for young or sensitive readers. The main character, Dime, is a smart, kind girl in the foster system. Troubles with her foster mom leave her on the street in the middle of winter. A seemingly kind pimp named Daddy takes her in, leading her into a life of prostitution. Characters are physically and emotionally abusive, with frequent slapping and beatings, some severe. Characters are raped. Characters are threatened with a knife and a gun. There are depictions of live-feed child pornography and prostitution and a graphic childbirth scene. Sex, though not graphic, is frequent both on the page and off, especially between johns and prostitutes. Drug use, including heroin and pot, is referred to but not shown. "Bitch" and "ho" are used frequently. Other swear words include "s--t," "f--k," and "motherf--ker."

- Educational Value

a lot

Plot and character details from some classic works of fiction. Workings of the foster system explained. Extensive information on why and how young women end up in prostitution and sex trafficking. Resources at end of book for further reading and how to help.

- Positive Messages

a little

Nothing is ever truly hopeless. Help is available if you can find the courage to ask for it.

- Positive Role Models

a little

The memory of a kind teacher, Mrs. McClenny, gets Dime through rough times. A librarian shows Dime kindness. Dime is helpful to other young women in the

"stable" of prostitutes. An unseen advocate gives a teen prostitute her business card.

- Violence & Scariness

a lot

Many physically and mentally abusive relationships. Though the book has a lot of violence, much isn't depicted graphically. Frequent instances of slapping, hitting, punching, kicking of girls at the hands of a foster mom, pimps, and each other. Much of the beating is vicious, resulting in bruising, bleeding, a lost tooth, and injured ribs. Hair pulling, objects thrown at heads. Teen girl gets severely beaten by three pimps. On two occasions, a girl is starved for a few days as retribution. Girl threatened with knife by foster mother. Men and teen attempt to fondle teen girl on a couple of occasions. Two young-adult sex-trafficking victims are raped by three men. Implied rape and beating of a teen prostitute by a police officer. Pimp holds gun to prostitute's head. Several references to violent sex between johns and prostitutes. Live-feed child pornography and child prostitution. Character is stabbed (not shown). A graphic childbirth scene.

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- Sex, Romance & Nudity

a lot

Kissing between adult male and teen girl. Adult male and teen girl have sex several times. Frequent, though not graphic, references to sex with johns, including anal, oral, and three-way sex. Many references to the way johns treat prostitutes during sex, including punching girls in the stomach and forcing them to do more than initially agreed upon.

Did you know you can flag iffy content? Adjust limits for Sex, Romance & Nudity in your kid's entertainment guide.

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- Language

a lot

"Bitch" and "ho" used frequently; "s--t," "f--k," "damn," "ass," "a--hole," "motherf--king," "God," "Jesus" used infrequently.

Did you know you can flag iffy content? Adjust limits for Language in your kid's entertainment guide.

Get started Close

- Products & Purchases

some

Murphy Oil Soap, HBO, Coke, *Angry Birds*, Xbox, Amazon, Honda, Corolla, Escalade, Doritos, Kohl's, Advil, Seven jeans, 7-Eleven, Chiclets, White Castle, Taco Bell, McDonald's, Disney World, and Nickelodeon. Occasional references to TV shows, mostly for scene setting. Several books mentioned, with *The Color Purple*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Goodnight Moon* figuring most prominently. An homage to *The Book Thief*, without the book being named, factors into the plot.

- Drinking, Drugs & Smoking

a little

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E.R. Frank. S&S/Atheneum, \$17.99 (336p) ISBN 978-1-4814-3160-6

"To be touched gently. To be seen clearly. To be part of a family. To be fed regularly. To be protected. To be loved for free." These are the things that eighth-grader Dime wants but doesn't receive from her foster mother. That's why she moves in with a group of girls and a man they call "Daddy." Before she knows it, Dime is part of a prostitution ring, still seeking comfort and love. Frank (*America*) delves deeply into the psychology of a lost girl who realizes she is trapped in a life she doesn't want. Dime seeks escape in books but rarely has the time or means to obtain them. When Daddy brings home 11-year-old Lollipop to work for him, Dime begins to separate truth from lies and right from wrong. Written from the perspective of Dime, who is anxious to compose a "note" that could save at least one innocent victim, the novel frankly depicts the physical abuse and emotional manipulation that tie young girls to their keepers. Images of violence, greed, and emotional longing will linger with readers. Ages 14-up. Agent: Heather Schroder, Compass Talent. (May)